

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 18-22, 24-29, 31, 32 and 35-37 are pending. No new matter has been added by way of the above amendments. For instance, claims 7, 17 and 24 have been amended to include the subject matter of previously pending claim 34. Claims 7, 17 and 24 have also been amended to remove the recitation of "solid" with respect to the range of fine-grains in the solid fine-grain dispersion. Claim 35 has been amended to depend upon claim 7. Lastly, new claims 36 and 37 are supported by claim 35 as well as the present specification at page 56, lines 3-5. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

A version with markings to show changes made has been attached for the Examiner's convenience.

In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and allow the currently pending claims.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner has rejected claims 7-13, 17-22, and 24-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, asserting that the recitation of "solid fine-grains" is inconsistent with the "fine grains" previously stated. Applicants traverse and submit that independent claims 7, 17 and 24 have been amended to remove the recitation of "solid". Accordingly, proper antecedent basis exists in these claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this

rejection are respectfully requested.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)/§ 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 7-12, 17-21, and 24-28 as being anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) or, in the alternative, obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Scaringe. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 7, 17 and 24, upon which all other rejected claims are dependent, have been amended to recite the subject matter of previously pending claim 34. Claim 34 has been indicated as being allowable by the Examiner. Accordingly, the inclusion of this subject matter in each of independent claims 7, 17 and 24 renders these claims likewise allowable. The above rejection is therefore overcome. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 13-16, 22-23 and 29-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Scaringe in view of Lobo. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

First, Applicants note that although the Examiner has included claims 13-16, 22-23, and 29-30 in this rejection, claims 14-16, 23 and 30 were previously cancelled with the Amendment submitted on November 13, 2001. Thus, the rejection with respect to these claims is improper and should be withdrawn.

Second, regarding claims 13, 22 and 29, Applicants note that these claims are dependent upon claims 7, 17 and 24, respectively.

Since claims 7, 17 and 24 include the subject matter of claim 34 which has been indicated by the Examiner to be allowable, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 13, 22 and 29 are likewise allowable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are therefore requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

At page 4 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 1-6, 31, 32, 34 and 35 are allowable. In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all currently pending claims, that is, claims 1-13, 18-22, 24-29, 31, 32 and 35-37 are also allowable. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw all rejections and allow the currently pending claims.

If the Examiner has any questions or comments, please contact Craig M. McRobbie, Reg. No. 42,874 at the offices of Birch, Stewart, Kolasch & Birch, LLP at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicants hereby petition for an extension of three (3) months to April 22, 2003 in which to file a reply to the Office Action. The required fee of \$930.00 is enclosed herewith.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this,

Application No.: 09/409,680

concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP



By: _____

Marc S. Weiner, #32,181
Craig A. McRobbie, #42,874

P. O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000

MSW/CAM/bsh

Attachment: Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

VERSION WITH MARKING TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 34 has been cancelled.

The claims have been amended as follows:

7. (Three Times Amended) A photographic solid fine-grain dispersion, which is obtained by a preparation method comprising the steps of:

successively bringing a slurry of a water-insoluble photographically useful compound in a grinding chamber of a dispersing machine, which chamber is filled with media,

allowing the compound to contact the media in the grinding chamber, to produce fine grains of the compound successively,

successively separating the media from the compound by centrifugal force, and

taking the compound out of the grinding chamber,

wherein the bulk density of the media is 4.0 g/cm^3 or more, the Vickers hardness thereof is 10 GPa or more, the breaking tenacity thereof is $5 \text{ MPa}\cdot\text{m}^{1/2}$ or more, and the average grain size thereof is 0.3 mm or less,

wherein the fine grains in the solid dispersion prepared have an average grain size of $0.01 \text{ }\mu\text{m}$ to $1 \text{ }\mu\text{m}$, [and]

wherein said solid fine-grain dispersion has a content of

[solid] fine-grains in the range of 3-60 wt%, and

wherein said solid fine-grain dispersion is prepared in the presence of a dispersing agent.

17. (Three Times Amended) A coating composition for a silver halide photographic light-sensitive material, which composition comprises a photographic solid fine-grain dispersion that is obtained by a preparation method comprising the steps of:

successively bringing a slurry of a water-insoluble photographically useful compound in a grinding chamber of a dispersing machine, which chamber is filled with media,

allowing the compound to contact the media in the grinding chamber, to produce fine grains of the compound successively,

successively separating the media from the compound by centrifugal force, and

taking the compound out of the grinding chamber,

wherein the bulk density of the media is 4.0 g/cm^3 or more, the Vickers hardness thereof is 10 GPa or more, the breaking tenacity thereof is $5 \text{ MPa}\cdot\text{m}^{1/2}$ or more, and the average grain size thereof is 0.3 mm or less,

wherein the fine grains in the solid dispersion prepared have an average grain size of $0.01 \text{ }\mu\text{m}$ to $1 \text{ }\mu\text{m}$, [and]

wherein said solid fine-grain dispersion has a content of [solid] fine-grains in the range of 3-60 wt%, and

wherein said solid fine-grain dispersion is prepared in the presence of a dispersing agent.

24. (Twice Amended) A silver halide photographic light-sensitive material having at least one light-sensitive silver halide emulsion layer on a support, which comprises a photographic solid fine-grain dispersion which is obtained by a preparation method comprising the steps of:

successively bringing a slurry of a water-insoluble photographically useful compound in a grinding chamber of a dispersing machine, which chamber is filled with media,

allowing the compound to contact the media in the grinding chamber, to produce fine grains of the compound successively,

successively separating the media from the compound by centrifugal force, and

taking the compound out of the grinding chamber,

wherein the bulk density of the media is 4.0 g/cm^3 or more, the Vickers hardness thereof is 10 GPa or more, the breaking tenacity thereof is $5 \text{ MPa}\cdot\text{m}^{1/2}$ or more, and the average grain size thereof is 0.3 mm or less, [and]

wherein said solid fine-grain dispersion has a content of [solid] fine-grains in the range of 3-60 wt%, and

wherein said solid fine-grain dispersion is prepared in the presence of a dispersing agent.

35. (Amended) The photographic solid fine-grain dispersion according to claim [34] 7, wherein said dispersing agent is used in the amount of 2-30 wt%.

Claims 36 and 37 have been added.